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October 2.

The President, Dr. **Ruschenberger**, in the chair.

Thirty-two members present.

The death of Dr. Edw. Roemer, correspondent, was announced.

Sensitive Stamens in Purslane.—Mr. **Thomas Meehan** said the stamens of *Portulaca oleracea* were sensitive. They expanded when the flower opened, and, on being touched, rose slowly, though with some force, and embraced the pistil. On being again touched, they fell back to their former position. After having once gone through this upward and backward movement, they would not repeat it, so far as his observation went. It was better to use the lens to observe the motion on the growing plant in the ground than on a gathered specimen. He remarked on how much there was to observe in the common things around us, and yet the long time it seemed to take us to discover them. About thirty-five years ago, he said, he made the discovery of sensitive stamens in the common garden Portulacas the subject of his first contribution to scientific literature; and one would suppose that he himself at least, with this hint, would have examined the Purslane before now. He spoke of the relationship of *Portulacaceæ* with *Cactaceæ*. *Opuntia* had sensitive stamens, and with the same behavior in the same organs in *Portulaca*, essentially the same viscid juice, and tendency to succulence, there was little beyond an increased number and consolidation of parts in *Cactaceæ* to distinguish them from *Portulaceæ*.

Emigration of Solanum rostratum.—Mr. **Thomas Meehan** exhibited a specimen of *Solanum rostratum*, collected by Dr. A. Gattinger, of Nashville, Tennessee, from waste ground about that city, where it had evidently established itself. It is a native of Colorado and contiguous territory, and is believed to be the plant which originally sustained the beetle *Doryphora decemlineata*, until it found a choicer article in the common potato. Mr. M. thought this the first case of its being found east of the Mississippi River. The potato beetle had in a measure forsaken it, and it was now following the beetle.

Dimorphism in Ailantus glandulosa.—Mr. **Thomas Meehan** exhibited specimens of *Ailantus glandulosa*, gathered on the grounds of Mrs. Aaron V. Brown, of Nashville, Tenn. There were but six to seven pairs of leaflets forming the entire leaf, terminating in a pair, and not with an odd one, as in the normal form. The leaflets were roundish-oval, very oblique at the base, having large coriaceous auricles, smooth and shining on the upper surface, and canescent beneath. The normal form has double the number of leaflets, which are narrowly lanceolate, and drawn out into a long narrow point. Nothing could be more unlike than the two forms. There were three trees near each other, among many hundreds of the normal form, all of which appeared to have come up in a measure naturally along fence rows in an old field. The broad shining leaflets gave the trees so marked an appearance as to attract attention from a long distance. They were seed-bearing (female) trees, as were many others of the normal form near them. It was, therefore, a great point gained to be able to show that the case was not one of sexual variation, to which many cases of dimorphism were properly referred. Another very interesting fact was that a branch of the normal form came out of one of the trees, and it was from this branch that the normal leaf now exhibited was taken. The laws regulating these variations seemed still obscure.

On the Feeding of Dinamœba.—Prof. Leidy remarked that bias frequently proved to be an obstacle in the way of research. In his study of the rhizopods, he had repeatedly watched different kinds of *Amœba* for long periods with the view of ascertaining their usual mode of feeding. Ordinary experience had prepossessed him to direct his attention to the forepart of the body, that is to say, the part in advance in the movements of the animal, as the point at which food would be taken. He had been surprised at the rarity of the occurrence in which he had seen *Amœbæ* swallow food when the apparent greediness of the animal was taken into consideration. In the last number of the Popular Science Review, there is an interesting article, by Mr. P. Martin Duncan, entitled "Studies amongst *Amœbæ*." From this he learned, from the observations of Mr. Duncan, that the *Amœbæ* habitually take their food at what may be considered the posterior part of the body. With this hint, he examined specimens of the curious amœboid animal, described under the name of *Dinamœba*, of which he had recently obtained a good supply from the ditches of a cranberry field at Atco, New Jersey. He had since on several occasions had the opportunity of seeing the *Dinamœba* take its food, which was done, as indicated by Mr. Duncan, at the posterior part of the body. One instance appeared to him to be particularly interesting, and was related as follows:—

Seeing a specimen of *Dinamœba* with its left side in contact with a filament of the alga *Bambusina Brebissonii*, he was led to watch it. On closer examination it proved that the alga entered to the left of the tail and extended through the body, causing a slight bulge of the ectosarc by its other end to the left of the head. The *Dinamœba* became slightly elongated, and the alga sunk more inwardly from behind. The former moved with an inclination to